

WATER BUGS

when my mother caught my father in
the garden watching two waterbugs
in the act of copulation
I heard that through the walls
many a night
but when she hid herself in the
rumbleseat of his car while he
drove to his girlfriend's place
and peeked out at where he
entered
she then broke in upon them
in the act of copulation and
I heard about that
through the walls
many a night.

I decided that when I grew up
I wouldn't make my woman
unhappy. but
it wasn't to be: I made
my women unhappy and they
made me unhappy.

and I've watched butterflies,
bugs, monkeys, people, dogs.
little children with big thoughts
are everywhere.

THE YARDS

I have gotten what men get from such things
by driving past the railroad yards
never on purpose but on my way to somewhere
and then I see the tracks and all the boxcars
the tank cars the flat cars
all of them still and so many of them
lined that way and not a train anywhere
where are the trains?
I drive past glancing sideways at it all
wide field of stillness
then I am past the railroad yards
and it wasn't the damned commerce of it
that gave me what I got
but something back there nameless
always making me feel better
as some men feel better looking at the sea

or the mountains or at wild animals
or at women
I like those things too
especially the wild animals and the women
but when I look at those old boxcars
with faded designs upon them
and those flats and those fat round tankers
I get quiet inside
I get what men get from such things
I feel better and it's good to feel better
not needing the reason.

2 BUDDIES

I am not sure of our exact ages
but Moses was one of my first real
friends:
Jewish and very strange
and my second real friend was
Red --
he had one arm
and wore a cast on the other:
an arm of pure white with a brown glove
over the artificial fingers.

Moses vanished first.
my father told me about him:
he pointed to the garage
a large white and yellow structure
with sagging doors:
"your friend Moses was caught in there
doing something to a 5 year old
girl. they got him."

Red was more durable.
we went swimming together in the public
pools and he had to take his arm off
and he splashed about with his arm-and-a
half, the little arm ending just below
the elbow and it looked like it had
tiny nipples on it
but more
they looked like tiny fingers.

the other boys got on him for his
half arm and his tiny fingers
but I was a very mean lad
and I told them
in terms most definite
that the pool belonged to